



Nisqually River Notes

A Publication of the Nisqually River Council

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Spotlight on Nisqually Sustainable!

Nisqually Sustainable is a free program, supported by the Nisqually River Council, which assists local businesses to be more environmentally friendly. The program encourages business owners and employees to take a closer look at their usage of water, energy and hazardous chemicals, as well as their waste. Certification is gained after a consultation and a commitment to continue taking definitive steps to increase environmental sustainability and reduce the ecological impacts of everyday activities. Participating businesses can then use the Nisqually Sustainable label for marketing and advertising materials. Check out our 3 featured Nisqually Sustainable businesses:



Whittaker Mountaineering



The legacy of the Whittaker name has been spread throughout the Pacific Northwest for over 60 years. Beginning with twins, Lou and Jim, and continuing with Lou's son, Peter, the Whittaker family has led countless numbers of guests and tourists to the summit of Mount Rainier through Rainier Mountaineering Inc., the most long-lived and wide-ranging guide service in North America. They have not only shared their years of experience with guests from all over the world, but they have also worked to provide their guests with the most durable and safe gear out there. Peter established Whittaker Mountaineering for this very reason, and with a guide staff of over 70 employees constantly testing the latest products, the store only selects and offers gear proven to be the best on the planet for your climbing and trekking needs. For more information on the history of the Whittaker family and gear carried by Whittaker Mountaineering, visit them at www.whittakermountaineering.com.

Wellspring Spa

Nestled in the woods, off the beaten track in Ashford, WA, Wellspring Spa is arguably one of the best-kept secrets of the upper watershed. For over 25 years, its remote location at the foot of Mount Rainier has provided a private sanctuary where guests can let go of stresses and take time to catch their breath while enjoying and exploring 10 acres of lush and beautiful Pacific Northwest forest. Whether on your own or with a large group for a meeting or wedding, Wellspring's owner and operator Sunny Thompson will be sure to accommodate all your needs and wishes. Filled with fresh air and the spirit of relaxation, Wellspring offers cedar hot tubs and sauna, as well as a number of massage and spa services that will melt your worries and tension away. It is guaranteed that you will leave Wellspring feeling refreshed and rejuvenated. For more information on lodging and amenities, visit them online at www.wellspringspa.com.



Yelm Earthworm and Castings Farm



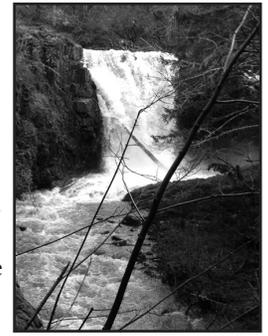
Established as a mushroom farm in the mid-1980's and converted into an earthworm farm in the 90's, Yelm Earthworm and Castings Farm has grown to be one of the largest worm farms in North America. They use traditional and time-tested methods to produce the finest worms and work to conserve, restore, and improve the soils of western Washington. The farm not only offers redworms, but worm tea, and their own Bare Foot Earthworm Castings, an organic mix of castings and worm compost, and a Potting Mix that is packed with enough microorganisms and nutrients that will help make any garden grow faster and healthier. Kelan, the man in charge at Yelm Earthworm and Castings, can even help you set up your own Worm Factory, for vermicomposting at your home or place of business. For more information about the farm and the benefits of vermiculture, horticulture, and organic farming, visit them online at www.yelmworms.com.

If you would like to receive more information or are interested in becoming a certified sustainable business, contact Ashley Von Essen with the Nisqually River Council at: 360.438.8715 or ashley@nisquallyriver.org.

The Nisqually's 7 Wonders: Part 1

The Little Mashel Falls

For the last year and a half, I've had the opportunity to work in and get to know the Nisqually watershed. My experience has not only allowed me to contribute to ongoing projects and restoration efforts, but has allowed me to gain a "backstage pass" to some of the most fascinating sections of the Nisqually River and its tributaries. Recently, I was able to take a hike to view three waterfalls that exist along the Little Mashel River. Hidden deep within the University of Washington's experimental Pack Forest, the Little Mashel Falls' intimidating force and scenic beauty makes it truly one of the great wonders of the Nisqually.



Taking the Falls Trail, we bushwhacked our way through the forest, heading towards the mystic thunder that echoed through the fallen trees from January's winter storm. We made our way to the Upper, Middle, and the Lower Falls, each one distinctive and majestic in its own way. It was amazing to see the Mashel River flowing, rushing through the gorge and over the rock wall. This area, virtually untouched by humans, was dripping with moss and moisture being expelled from the amazing cascades. To witness the power of the falls and to feel their spray upon my face, it was hard not to recognize the authority they hold over the surrounding forest.

This is merely one of the gems we have in the Nisqually Watershed. From the stoic Nisqually Glacier at Mount Rainier to the vast salt waters of the Puget Sound, I think we can all agree that we are incredibly fortunate to live, work, and play in one of the most beautiful places in the country.



The only way to access the falls is through the entrance at Pack Forest in Eatonville, WA off Highway 7. Upon entering the facility, pick up a trail map at the gatehouse. This will guide you to a variety of hikes, but to explore the magic of the falls look for the Falls Trail. From Road 1000, this hike is about 5.5 miles round trip. Remember to dress for the weather and take your time on these trails. This hike is recommended for strong hikers with experience only.

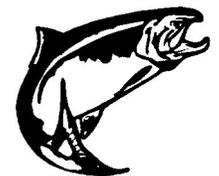
What is your favorite place in the Nisqually watershed? Is there a place that is near and dear to your heart? We would like to compile a list of the "7 Wonders of the Nisqually" and we want to hear from you! Send your ideas, stories, and pictures to help us highlight some of the amazing places our watershed has to offer! Email them to Ashley at: ashley@nisquallyriver.org. We would love to share your experiences with the community through our newsletter and Facebook page.

Check out the Nisqually River Council's Facebook page for pictures of our adventure!



Eatonville Stormwater Initiative

Stormwater runoff is the leading producer of water pollution in the Puget Sound. In order to protect our rivers and streams from this influx of toxins and contaminants, rain gardens are being introduced all over western Washington*. The installation of these structures has decreased the amount of contaminated stormwater by quickly absorbing stormwater runoff and the pollutants it carries, including fertilizers, pesticides, and automobile-related materials. They also recharge groundwater stores, improve water quality, control flooding, and encourage wildlife and biodiversity that are aesthetically pleasing.



The waterways that flow through the Town of Eatonville, the Mashel River, and Ohop and Lynch Creeks, have been identified as critical habitat for salmon spawning. It is estimated that 80 percent of the Town's untreated stormwater runoff runs right into these tributaries. The introduction of high amounts of stormwater leads to issues with water quality, increased erosion, disturbance of salmon redds, and the alteration of water temperatures that are needed to stay cool for the survival of salmon.

The Town of Eatonville is looking to infiltrate 100% of its stormwater. There are a number of efforts from project partners and community members working together to reduce the effects of stormwater. Eatonville has already installed 21 rain gardens and is looking to install more through funding provided by the Nisqually Tribe, Puget Sound Partnership, EPA, and Stewardship Partners. A new program established by Nisqually Stream Stewards, Rain Dog Designs, and the Nisqually River Education Project will see that these rain gardens are put in the ground while teaching high school students and other community members to install them. Rain garden installations will be incorporated into this year's Nisqually Stream Stewards training program, asking volunteers to install a rain garden in the Town of Eatonville from start to finish. The program is looking for high school juniors and seniors aiming to complete a senior project prior to graduation. If you or anyone you know is interested please contact us at info@nisquallyriver.org.



Looking for more information about rain gardens? Check out Rain Dog Designs website at www.raindogdesigns.com. Rain Dog Designs is both Nisqually Sustainable Certified and EnviroStar 5-Star.

*For more information, check out the campaign by Stewardships Partners and WSU-Extension to place 12,000 rain gardens in the Puget Sound! Visit www.12000raingardens.org.





The Nisqually River Education Project

Salmon Toss
January 2012

February
2012
850 students
monitored
29 sites



In 7 trips,
163 students
with 24 chaperones
tossed 1,240 fish....

...that's 14,880 pounds of marine derived
nutrients to support the next generation of
salmon!!!!

20th Annual Student GREEN Congress

On March 23, 2012, more than 400 students gathered at The Evergreen State College to share their water quality results and learn environmental skills and arts. Thanks to all of the teachers, students and the supporting faculty at TESC who made this day inspiring!



Nisqually Water Quality
Monitoring

Meet the New Evergreen Interns!



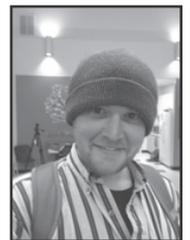
Danika Didur-Tate

Hi! My name is Danika Didur-Tate. I was introduced to the NREP through my professor at The Evergreen State College, Jeff Antonelis-Lapp. As part of my winter program I worked with the NREP, and during Spring quarter I'll be a (near) full-time intern. I never realized I could combine my love of teaching and of working with the natural world until I worked here. I have a lot of interesting experiences under my belt, from habitat restoration in Costa Rica (both natural and cultural habitat), to working with dementia patients at an assisted living facility, to being an Elections Officer at polling stations, but I don't have too many that prepared me for the field of Environmental Education. I am super excited to start and feel confident in my abilities to teach and interact with children. I really hope to also design curriculum that fits with current educational mandates, interact with teachers and school administrators, and help kids learn to love their environment. As Stephen Jay Gould said, "We will not fight to save what we do not love." Here, with the dynamic Nisqually River and its many allies, I know I couldn't be at a better place to begin this journey.



Travis Bowen

In Fall 2011 I enrolled in, Citizen Science: Ecoliteracy, a program at The Evergreen State College, which required us to participate in a part time service contract for winter quarter. I pulled the Nisqually River Education Project out of a hat, so to speak. The program and my professors at Evergreen reawakened a need within me to work in service for our children, and their children's children. My time spent at Nisqually, watching and engaging with the children in our watershed has further cemented this movement by witnessing their enthusiasm for what they are doing. It is this that I wish to assist in spreading as best I can to an Earth suffering from misuse and neglect, and the NREP is an example of what we need more of in every aspect of our society and culture. This quarter, I hope to gain the ability to continue this movement toward a sustainable and appreciative relationship with the lands we call home, for all the life it holds, is the life that makes living worth living.



Farewell, Florian!

Florian Leischner has been a valued partner working with the Nisqually Indian Tribe as a habitat and salmon restoration biologist for the past 11 years. His blood, sweat, and tears have poured into every reach of the Nisqually River, from the glacier to the Sound. From completing salmon spawning surveys and logjam placements in the Mashel River, to salmon carcass additions in the upper watershed, and habitat restoration of the Nisqually delta, Florian has shared an amazing amount of passion and knowledge in the name of natural resources.



After over a decade of service, Florian decided to make a change for the future and has chosen to pursue a career with Tacoma Power as a fisheries biologist. I can speak for everyone at the Nisqually River Foundation and the Nisqually Indian Tribe by saying that Florian will be very missed. His strides to reverse the dwindling salmon populations of the Nisqually and its tributaries have not gone unnoticed. We appreciate the hard work, dedication, and uplifting spirit that Florian has shared. His footprint on the Nisqually watershed will be forever recognized. Thank you so much, Flo, and good luck in all your future endeavors!!

Important Dates, Happenings, and Information

June

- 6/6 Stream Stewards Training Begins
6/15 NRC Meeting, Braget Farm
CAC Meeting, Braget Farm
6/25-27 NREP Summer Teacher Institute, NNWR

July

- 7/7 NLT NatureMapping, Wilcox Flats
7/20 NRC Meeting, Ashford Fire Hall
7/22-28 Natural Resources Youth Camp, Eatonville

August

- 8/17 NRC Meeting, NNWR
CAC Meeting, TBA

Please contact us for more details!
info@nisquallyriver.org

Contacts

NLT -- Nisqually Land Trust
staff@nisquallylandtrust.org
360.489.3400

NNWR -- Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (I-5 at Exit 114)
<http://www.fws.gov/Nisqually>
360.753.9467

NRC -- Nisqually River Council
info@nisquallyriver.org
360.438.8715

NREP -- Nisqually River Education Project
sheila@nisquallyriver.org
360.438.8715 x 2153

NRYC -- Natural Resources Youth Camp
info@nryc.org
360.754.3588 x 114

NSS -- Nisqually Stream Stewards
perry.don@nisqually-nsn.gov
360.438.8687 x 2143

Important News

In the coming year, The Nisqually River Foundation will be looking to combine our communication efforts and mailings with those of the Nisqually Stream Stewards.

This means you will be able to receive the annual Nisqually watershed salmon recovery newsletter, Yil-Me-Hu. This publication informs its readers of habitat restoration and conservation efforts, as well as events and people of the watershed.

To opt out of this mailing, please write us at info@nisquallyriver.org or call us at 360.438.8715.

Please contact 360.438.8715 or ashley@nisquallyriver.org for more information about the Nisqually River Council or any of these events!

www.nisquallyriver.org

Nisqually River Foundation
12501 Yelm Highway SE
Olympia, WA 98513

Collaboration. Education. Advocacy.

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